

It is imperative that the warm words in Michael Gove's speech today are followed by robust action – Sue Hayman

Sue Hayman MP, Labour's Shadow Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, responding to the speech given by Michael Gove MP today, said:

"It is imperative that the warm words in Michael Gove's speech today are followed by robust action, and we will hold the Government's feet to the fire to ensure that they deliver on their promises when it comes to the environment, agriculture and fisheries. Gove has been notoriously dismissive of expert advice in the past, so Labour will closely watch that he follows the science when it comes to our precious environment.

"The agricultural sector needs long-term certainty post-Brexit. Gove says he wants to continue supporting farmers after we leave the Common Agricultural Policy, but we must get the detail on this as soon as possible, so that farmers can plan for the future.

"Britain must lead by example when it comes to tackling climate change. We welcome the Environment Secretary denouncing President Trump's reckless and irresponsible approach to climate change and the Paris Agreement. Labour wants to see EU environmental protections transposed into British law and strengthened where necessary. We will not allow the Government to use Brexit as an excuse to attempt to water down this important legislation.

"We must champion sustainable farming and fishing by investing in and promoting skills, technology, market access and innovation. Labour in government will reconfigure farming and fisheries subsidies on the basis of environmental management, innovation, and productivity – not just the amount of land you own – and reconfigure funds for farming to support smaller traders, local economies, community benefits and sustainable practices."